



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Muniz Ranches Property Owners Association Fire Prevention Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	Sections 25 & 36, T8N, R12W, MDB&M	COUNTY	Sonoma
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Megan Scheeline, VMP Forester		
ADDRESS	Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit 1199 Big Tree Road St. Helena, CA 94574-9711	PHONE	(707) 967-1428

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This fuels reduction-shaded fuel break project is located along portions of Muniz Ranch Road (a private road), situated on a ridgetop in western Sonoma County, 2.5 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Vegetation in the project area is predominantly Douglas-fir and redwood trees that are competing with overstocked hardwoods (mostly tanoak) and brush. There are some grasslands near the project area. The project site does not contain habitat for aquatic species.

Hardwoods will be treated with a County approved herbicide, in compliance with label restrictions and regulations. The herbicide prescription will be developed by a Certified Pesticide Applicator. The goal is to control regrowth and maintain project objectives for a longer period of time. All target species (mostly tanoak) 1 inches or greater will be treated, up to a maximum of approximately 20 inches DBH. Diameter is measured at a stem height of 4.5 feet on the stem's uphill side. Some large hardwood tree may be retained. A sample area will be marked by the advising forester or under supervision by a forester to illustrate to the Licensed Timber Operator (LTO) the desired leave stand condition.

The LTO will use chainsaws, handsaws, chipper, and/or a masticator or feller-buncher (depending on slope) to remove ladder fuels from a 15-acre area approximately 40 feet from each side of approximately 8,200 feet of Muniz Ranch Road. During project implementation mostly brush (but also dead or dying trees) will be removed. Thickets of small trees (hardwoods, redwood and Douglas-fir up to 12 inches) will be thinned and pruned. Some hardwoods will be retained. The result will be a shaded fuel break with a leave tree stand (including seedlings) that will have a range of spacing between 15x15 to 20x20 feet.

Overall, slash treatment objectives are to reduce fuel loading and will meet or exceed the standards for slash disposal in the Forest Practice Rules by the end of the project contract. All debris generated by the project will be masticated, chipped and spread over the landscape, or lopped and scattered.

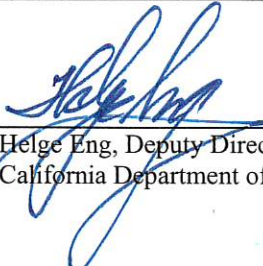
EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under portions of 18.36.060 Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land, §15304 Field review by Matt Greene RPF #2747 confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE's St. Helena office.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING


Helge Eng, Deputy Director
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Governor's Office of Planning & Research
NOV 22 2016
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